

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00

NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 NSCE-00 SSO-00

USIE-00 INRE-00 A-01 OPR-02 SY-05 OC-06 CCO-00 SSM-03

IO-13 NEAE-00 ACDA-07 OMB-01 /100 W

-----071656Z 105484 /65

O P 071542Z JAN 77

FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2694

INFO SIT-REP COLLECTIVE PRIORITY 193

USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER

USNMR SHAPE BELGIUM

CINCUSNAVEUR, LONDON ENG

CINCUSAFE RAMSTEIN AB GER

CIA WASHDC

COMSIXTHFLT

COMPHIBRON SIX

COM THREE FOUR MAU

CTF SIX ZERO

CTF SIX ONE

CTF SIX TWO

CTG SIX ZERO PT TWO

FICEURLANT NORFOLK VA

FOSIF ROTA SPAIN

DIA WASHDC

CINCUSAREUR HEIDELBERG GER

USDOCOSOUTH NAPLES IT

C O N F I D E N T I A L BEIRUT 0089

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MILI, PINS, PINT, LE

SUBJECT: LEBANESE SITUATION JANUARY 6-7

REF: BEIRUT 0039 (DTG 051112Z JAN 77)

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1. SUMMARY. QUADRIPARTITE COMMITTEE TO MEET ON HEAVY ARMS COLLECTION

JAN 7 AND MAY ALSO DISCUSS COLLECTION OF LIGHT WEAPONS AND ASSISTANCE TO INTERNAL SECURITY FORCES. PRESIDENT SARKIS RECEIVED DIPLOMATIC CORPS AT NEW YEAR'S RECEPTION JAN 6. HEAVY SHELLING AND CONTINUED FIGHTING IN THE SOUTH. EAST BEIRUT SECURITY SITUATION IMPROVED AS SOME

ROADS REOPENED AND SCHOOLS AGAIN HOLDING CLASSES. PIERRE GEMAYEL APPEALS TO HIS FOLLOWERS TO COOPERATE WITH ASF IN INVESTIGATION OF ASHRAFIYA INCIDENT; CAMILLE CHAMOUN SAYS PPS AND COMMUNISTS WERE PERPETRATORS; COMMUNIST ACTION ORGANIZATION REP CALLS ACCUSATIONS AGAINST HIS GROUP "FABRICATIONS." PLO DEMANDING FRENCH DISCLOSE NAMES

OF MURDERERS OF PLO REPRESENTATIVE MAHMOUD SALEH. FONMIN BOUTROS WILL

NOT ATTEND ARAB FOREIGN MINISTERS' CONFERENCE BUT WILL SEND HIGH-LEVEL

FOREIGN MINISTRY DELEGATION. PRESS CENSORSHIP BEGINNING TO HIT FOREIGN CORRESPONDENTS. END SUMMARY.

2. HEAVY WEAPONS COLLECTION--WAITING FOR GODOT. PRESIDENT SARKIS MET JAN 6 WITH EGYPTIAN, SAUDI, AND KUWAITI AMBASSADORS, WHO AGREED THAT QUADRIpartite COMMITTEE WOULD MEET JAN 7 AT BAABDA TO TAKE "FINAL DECISION" ON WEAPONS COLLECTION. SARKIS ALSO MET WITH COL MOHAMMAD AL-KHOLY, THE SYRIAN REPRESENTATIVE IN THE QUADRIpartite COMMITTEE, ON

HIS RETURN TO BEIRUT FROM DAMASCUS JAN 6. AL-KHOLY LATER SAID "WE BOTH

AGREE, AND THIS IS THE VIEW OF THE QUADRIpartite COMMITTEE, THAT HEAVY

ARMS SHOULD BE COLLECTED AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE." ASH SHARQ REPORTS COMMITTEE WILL ALSO DISCUSS SECOND STAGE OF SECURITY PLAN--COLLECTION OF LIGHT ARMS--AND ASSISTANCE TO ISF.

3. DIPLOMATIC NEW YEAR'S RECEPTION. PRESIDENT SARKIS HOSTED A NEW YEAR'S RECEPTION FOR THE DIP CORPS, AND ADDRESSED GROUP, WHICH WAS CONFIDENTIAL

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IN FULL REGALIA (SEPTTEL).

4. SECURITY SITUATION: FIGHTING IN THE SOUTH. ALAMAL AND VOICE OF LEBANON REPORT CONTINUED FIGHTING IN THE SOUTH, INCLUDING SHELLING BY LEFTISTS OF AYN IBL, QULAY'AH, ARNUN, AND KHYAM. A UN SOURCE TOLD DATT THAT MAJ AHMED AHDAM, LAA G-2, HAS REQUESTED CHAIRMAN OF UN ILMAC AT NAKOURA TO ARRANGE MEETING BETWEEN HIMSELF AND ISRAELI AUTHORITIES, PRESUMABLY TO DISCUSS SITUATION IN SOUTH LEBANON.

5. SECURITY SITUATION: ASHRAFIYAH COWKOLING OFF. SECURITY IN BEIRUT CONTINUES IMPROVE IN WAKE OF JAN 3 ASHRAFIYAH INCIDENT. ASF ANNOUNCED THAT IT HAD CLOSED CERTAIN STREETS AS PRECAUTIONARY MEASURE, BUT NOW THAT CONDITIONS HAVE IMPROVED SOME OF THESE WOULD BE REOPENED JAN 7.

SCHOOLS IN EAST BEIRUT REOPENED JAN 7. PHALANGE RADIO ANNOUNCED A BOMB EXPLOSION IN PHALANGE HEADQUARTERS IN JBAYL CAUSING HEAVY MATERIAL DAMAGE BUT NO CASUALTIES.

6. POLITICAL REVERBERATIONS OF ASHRAFIYAH EXPLOSION: ON THE RIGHT. PIERRE GEMAYEL, WHO ALSO MET WITH PRESIDENT SARKIS JAN 6, AGAIN AP-

PEALED TO HIS KATAEB FOLLOWERS TO EXERCISE RESTRAINT AND ASSIST ASF IN

RESTORING SECURITY. CAMILLE CHAMOUN, WHO ATTRIBUTED ASHRAFIYAH EXPLOSION TO THE PPS AND COMMUNISTS, CLAIMED THAT ON JAN 4 A SHIP CARRYING ARMS OFFLOADED AT TYRE, SOME OF WHICH WENT TO THE SOUTH WHILE

OTHERS WERE SENT TO AREAS NEAR BEIRUT. HE SAID, "IF THESE INCIDENTS CONTINUE, WE SHALL NOT KEEP SILENCE AND THIS MEANS A RETURN TO FIGHTING AND TO THE FORMER SITUATION."

7. ON THE LEFT. ON JAN 5, PALESTINIAN NEWS AGENCY Wafa QUOTED FOLLOWING FROM COMMUNIST ACTION ORGANIZATION (CAO) REP IN LEBANON: "THE REPORTS PROPAGATED BY CERTAIN UNOFFICIAL INFORMATION APPARATUSES REGARDING THE SEIZURE OF A CAR ALLEGEDLY CARRYING MEMBERS OF THE CAO ARE

TOTAL FABRICATIONS." PALESTINIAN CENTRAL POLITICAL COUNCIL ALSO DENOUNCED ACCUSATIONS AS PHALANGE PROPAGANDA.
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8. PALESTINIAN-FRENCH CONNECTIONS. Wafa ANNOUNCED DELIVERY BY PLO THROUGH FRENCH EMBASSY IN BEIRUT TO FRENCH FONMIN OF AN OFFICIAL MEMORANDUM DEMANDING DISCLOSURE OF NAMES OF TERRORISTS WHO ASSASSINATED PLO REPRESENTATIVE MAHMOUD SALEH TWO DAYS AGO IN PARIS.

9. ARAB FOREIGN MINISTERS' CONFERENCE. FOREIGN MINISTER BOUTROS ANNOUNCED THAT HE WILL NOT ATTEND ARAB FOREIGN MINISTERS' CONFERENCE IN CAIRO LATER THIS MONTH, BUT HE WOULD SEND A NUMBER OF FOREIGN MINISTRY OFFICIALS.

10. PRESS CENSORSHIP--AWKWARD BEGINNINGS. NEWLY INSTITUTED PRESS CENSORSHIP IN LEBANON (BEIRUT 0032) IS INCONVENIENCING FOREIGN CORRESPONDENTS, WHO ARE BEGINNING TO FIND THAT CENSORS ARE INTERPRETING BROADLY THE SUBJECTS TO BE CENSORED. FOREIGN NEWSMEN TELL US CENSORS ARE DEMANDING THAT NEWSMEN INSTALL TELEX MACHINERY AT CENSORS,

OFFICES, AT THEIR OWN EXPENSE. CENSORS REPORTEDLY ARE DEMANDING THAT TELEVISION FILMS FOR SHIPMENT ABROAD BE DEVELOPED BEFOREHAND IN BEIRUT

(IMPOSSIBLE AT PRESENT) AND THAT COPIES BE FILED WITH THEM FOR KEEPING.

CENSORS REPORTEDLY ALSO IMPOSING A TAX ON MATERIALS TO BE CENSORED. WE HAVE HEARD RUMOR THAT GHASSAN TUEINI, PUBLISHER OF AN NAHAR (WHICH HAS NOT YET REAPPEARED), PRESENTLY IN PARIS, IS SELLING PERSONAL POSSESSIONS--POSSIBLY LOOKING TOWARDS SELF-EXILE. WHEN SYRIAN TROOPS OCCUPIED AN NAHAR THREE WEEKS AGO, THEY ALSO REPORTEDLY SEIZED ALL OF TUEINI'S PERSONAL PAPERS.

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